



November 12, 2020

Dear Texas Physician:

Health Maintenance Organizations in Texas are required by state law (Chapter 108 of the Texas Health and Safety Code) to report certain quality of care data, by service area, to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) on an annual basis. These data involve reporting HEDIS® (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set) measures to DSHS. The accuracy of the data reported is greatly enhanced if health plan representatives are allowed to review the medical records of randomly selected members for specific evidence related to that member's health care. Certain measure specifications, developed by the National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA), require clinical data beyond what is routinely collected in administrative data systems.

This data collection is permitted under HIPAA. Covered entities, including health plans, are permitted to use protected health information to carry out treatment, payment, or health care operations according to HIPAA law §164.502 (a)(1)(ii). Reporting to DSHS is an operational requirement of all health plans by state law.

The purpose of this letter is to request your cooperation in allowing health plan staff to have access to your organization's medical records. The data that they collect are reported to DSHS in the aggregate by plan service area. Health plan staff will use the results of this review to report an average for all plan members to DSHS. Patient level data are not collected by DSHS from health plans. Patient data should not be sent to DSHS.

June 15, 2021 is this cycle's deadline for health plans to report HEDIS® data to DSHS. The data collected will be used by Office of Public Insurance Counsel (OPIC) to develop reports for use by consumers and employer purchasers in making selections among health plans, and by health plans themselves in developing ways to improve their plan's performance. The most recent publication on Texas commercial HMOs can be found at <https://www.opic.texas.gov/health/guide-to-texas-hmo-quality>.

If you have any questions regarding the HMO reporting requirements or how data can be reported to DSHS free of any patient identifier, please contact the THCIC program at (512) 776-7261 or via email at thcichelp@dshs.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Wyman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lisa" and last name "Wyman" clearly distinguishable.

Lisa Wyman, PhD, MPH
Director of the Center for Health Statistics
Texas Department of State Health Services